

## Growing Up

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Summary: You know how Bella became a mermaid when she was 9? Well this is a story when they're all 9 as mermaids, they hate their lives, and when they meet, they decide to live on Mako Island. Just a bunch of their adventures as island girls.

### 1. Chapter 1

"Mummy? Daddy? Can we go to the beach and play? Please?" I asked. "Not today Bella. We've got a meeting to go to." Daddy said. "That's what you always say! You always have some meeting, or conference, or something! And you never have time for me!" I said, my eyes tearing up. "Oh, Bella, we're sorry. But you know daddy's work takes a lot of time and-" daddy started, but I cut him off. "I don't care! It's like I'm just another piece of paper work rather than your little girl! You never pay attention to me! I miss you! I wish for once we could have a whole day together, with no calls from the office to bother us! You even missed my ninth birthday because of your stupid job!" I said, tears spilling down my cheeks. "Oh, Bella, please don't cry!" Mummy pleaded. "Why not, it's not like you care!" I shouted. I turned and ran, sobbing into my hands. "Bella wait!" Daddy yelled, but I kept running. They didn't follow, probably because they were too busy with another hotel or whatever. I don't know how, but I ended up at these sea cliffs. Curious, I climbed down. I fell multiple times, scraping my knees and hands, and it hurt. I cried for a bit, but I soon stopped, wanting to explore.

My dress was pretty dirty when I made it to the bottom. The brown teddy bear that was located on my chest was nearly invisible, due to all the dirt and mud that had been stuck to the blue fabric during my many falls. My pretty white socks were filthy and had some little weeds in them, which scratched my skin, but I did my best to ignore it. My little black dress shoes that were once shiny and beautiful were now smudged and yucky looking. My long brown hair had leaves stuck in it and was all tangled, from having the harsh wind blow it around. As I reached the bottom, I saw a pool of pretty glowing blue water, with thousands of glittery stars above it. "Oooh, it's so

sparkly." I said to myself. I looked down at myself, observing my horribly dirty garments. Mummy would be so angry if she discovered my mucky cloths, so I decided to clean them in the pool. The water was very warm, much to my surprise. It was like the water mummy uses for my bath. It wasn't hot, but not cold either, just warm. It felt so good when it touched my skin, I decided to get in. I slipped off my dress, socks, and shoes, feeling grateful I'd put my pink bikini on. I plunged in, feeling great. I laid on my back, floating, allowing my mind to wander.

Suddenly, the water started to bubble and churn, and my eyes shot open. I turned over on my stomach, attempting to pull myself out. The rocks now seemed very slippery though, as if they were covered with hand soap. I couldn't pull myself out, and I was trapped in a scary pool of bubbling water, with a giant white full moon overhead, seeming to stare at me like the vicious eye of some huge monster. I closed my eyes tight, praying for it to stop. Then, as if my prayers had been answered, all at once, the churning stopped. My legs started to feel tingly, and I glanced behind me. I gasped at the beautiful sight that met my eyes. A long, shimmery, golden tail had replaced my legs. When I looked at my chest, I found that my pink swimsuit top was gone, but instead, there was a shiny \_gold \_bikini top, which matched the scales perfectly. I had turned into "a mermaid." I said. I was so happy! I've always wanted to be a mermaid, but when I asked mummy if she could teach me how for an extra class while she home schooled me, she just laughed. She said it could never happen. And daddy agreed; he'd said it was impossible. But now, now I was. They were wrong! This was so cool, my dreams have literally come true! I decided I'd try my new mermaid tail out, and ducked under water. I slowly opened my eyes, adjusting to the astounding sights before me. There were fish of all kinds, just outside the pool, and I swam to them, waving. I dove deeper, admiring the pretty shells. I was surprised I could see so clearly, even though it was completely dark. I saw a really pretty shell on the bottom, and I went over to it. I picked it up out of the sand, observing it. It was a pretty pink color, with lots of sparkles. \_Oh, I bet mummy will love this!\_ I thought. I kept swimming around, shell in hand. I found it easier to steer if my hand were out in front of me, going up and down just as my tail did. I then saw something else. There was a big spiral shell on one of the pieces of coral, and I hurried over to it. It was a bright blue color, with green stripes. \_Perfect! I'll give this to daddy, and he can give it to his boss! That'll make them both happy!\_ I thought. I headed back to the pool, where my clothes were, probably dry now. As I surfaced, I noticed something weird. As I looked up, the moon was gone, and the sky was turning orange! The sun was rising! Had I really been gone that long? I only remembered coming up for air about ten times, and that was all. I decided to see if I'd just imagined it, and went back under.

As I was counting the seconds, I noticed something glinting at the bottom. I made my way towards it, mesmerized with it's beauty. It was a pretty crystal, a shiny ocean blue with purple hues mixed in. It was a truly lovely sight. I picked it up, eager to show my parents. It sparkled like a gem, shining like the sun. As I surfaced, I made my way to the shore, where my clothes were, now clean and dry. I dragged myself out of the water, wondering what to do. What if my tail didn't go away? Oh well, I've always wanted to be a mermaid, and now I was. I didn't have to be human anymore, or deal with a mummy and daddy who never had time for me. From now on, it would be just me and the sea. I liked that idea, maybe I could put that in a song. I

love to sing.

I started making up song, singing the made up lyrics to myself. "Just the sea and me. Just the sea and me. The sea is all I really need. It's just the sea and me. Just me and the deep, blue sea, it's just me. And the sea. Swimming along, playing with the colorful fish. Darting here and there, not a single care. In the whole wide world. Picking up a few pink shells. Play some tag with the dolphins, maybe find a pearl. Might even see another mermaid, in the sea with me. With me. We'd swim and play, laugh and have a great day. If I had a mermaid friend, I'd make sure we're together till the end. Till the end. Till the very end. Of our amazing sea journey. Our amazing sea journey. We'd talk about it when we're older, yes. Have a laugh or two about the fun we had. As best friends. We'd be the best of friends. And no one could change that, no matter how hard they tried. Because friends are always there one another, especially best friends. Especially best friends." I paused, thinking what the next words should be. Suddenly, my tail shimmered and vanished, replacing itself with my legs. My pink bikini came back. It suddenly hit me, hard as a shark attack. "Then, when we're back on land, our tails will go away. But do not be sad, my friend, they will come back again. I promise you. When we're wet again, our fins will reappear. Then we'll go back to life in the sea. Just you and me. But this time, it will not be just me and the sea. It'll be us and the sea, us and the sea. We won't be alone anymore, to see the wonders of the deep blue ocean, alone. No one should have to experience, something as grand as being a mermaid alone. Do not worry, do not cry, I am here. Here to play with the dolphins with you. Here to find the prettiest shells, with you, my mermaid friend, my best friend. You are my best friend, I will help you when you need it, I'll never leave you alone. When you are upset, and need a helping hand. Or when you just want to go for a swim and see the wonders of the sea with someone, with someone you can trust, someone who can make you smile, even when you are feeling down. And that someone is me, me and the sea." I finished, slipping my dress over my head. I pulled my shoes and socks on, folding the cuffs over one inch. I combed through my tangled brown hair with my fingers, then climbed the rocks again. About half way up, I spotted a sand path that was a lot less steep, and it went in the same direction, so I climbed it instead. I made it up to the top in less than half of what I'd taken climbing down, only falling twice. I went back to the trailer my mummy had for us, the one we stay in when she takes pictures. She loves to take pretty pictures of just about anything, as long as it's got lots of details and color. "Mummy! Daddy!" I said as I ran inside. There was no reply, only silence in response. "Mummy? Daddy? Aren't you here?" I asked, again getting a devastating answer. I found a small note on the table, and I was really hating the fact that I can read. The note said\_ Dear Bella, we know you are missing, but we don't have time to look for you. I had another meeting, from mom and dad. P.S. We'll be back sometime tonight, or maybe tomorrow.\_ My eyes watered, but I couldn't let them spill. Then my tail might come and they'd know. I didn't want to tell them, I wanted it to be my secret. I ran down the narrow path to the pool, diving in, still in my dress. I started crying, even though the water just ripped the tears away. I swam off as fast as I could, not sure where I was going, just away from the empty trailer, knowing that my mummy and daddy didn't even care I was missing, they'd just gone to another meeting.

I swam as far as I could, coming up for air every twenty minutes or so. Pretty soon, I saw a piece of land, with lots of buildings and

people. I knew I couldn't go to that crowded beach, so I decided I'd go to a small island I saw in the distance. I circled it, wondering where to go. I couldn't risk going up on the sand, what if someone drove a boat there and saw me? As I was swimming around a second time, I saw a small opening in the rocks. Curious, I went in. It opened up into a small cave, with the same glowing blue water as the pool in Ireland. I swam up to the rocks, folding my arms and setting them on the rocks. I laid my head on them, and started to cry again, sobbing quietly.

-Cleo's POV-

As we and my two best friends, Rikki and Emma, were swimming out to Mako island, I wondered how I'd gotten so lucky. At first, I'd hated the water, and my tail, but it only took one amazing swim with the other two girls to change my mind. We were swimming our fastest, hair flying behind us. We headed for the moon pool, the magical pool which had changed us into mermaids. We're each only nine, but our tails are really long, and we're excellent swimmers. As we surfaced in the water, a strange sound met our ears. There was another little girl there, head laid on the rocks, crying. Strangest of all, she had a long, gold tail running out behind her body, a mermaid tail, just like ours. "E-excuse me? Are you alright?" Emma asked. The other girl quickly turned around, frightened. "Wh-who are you?" she asked. "I'm Cleo, and these are my friends, Rikki and Emma." "Oh, I'm Bella." The girl said. "So, Bella, why were you crying? What's wrong?" I asked. "W-well, my mummy and daddy don't care about me!" she said, covering her face with her hands. We all glanced at each other, looks of understanding crossing over our faces. Rikki's parents had split up, and her dad hardly ever talked to her, or did anything to acknowledge her existence. My mummy and daddy fight a lot, and my rude little sister Kim is always picking on me and calling me names and breaking my toys, then saying I did it. Emma's parents are too busy with their developing and her little brother Elliot to play with her or talk to her or anything else. "Why would you say that?" Emma asked. "I'm sure that's not true." Rikki said. "Yeah, I'm sure they love you." I added, although, after our experiences, we found it hard to believe that anyone's parents actually have time for them and care about their children, but we didn't say that. "No, they don't!" she wailed. "They knew I was missing, but didn't even try to look for me. They just went to daddy's hotel meeting!" She said. "Hey, hey, hey, it's ok." Emma said. She went forward, patting Bella's shoulder. "Yeah, don't be sad. I never even get to see my mummy." Rikki said. "You- you don't?" Bella asked. Rikki shook her head sadly. "No. Mummy left when I was six. I never saw her again. It think daddy called it something, a divorce?" she said. "That's divorce, Rikki!" Emma said. "You're both wrong! It's divorce!" I said. "No it isn't! it's divorce!" Bella said. "Yeah, I think that's it!" Emma said. "But anyway, we understand." I said. "H-How?" Bella asked, sniffing miserably. "Well, my mummy and daddy always fight, and my little sister Kim is really mean!" I said. "Yeah! Three days ago, she 'accidentally' poured her orange juice all over my head! My hair is \_still \_sticky!" Emma said. "That's terrible!" Bella exclaimed. "Well, at least you parents even know you exist! My daddy never talks to me or anything! He forgets my birthday all the time." Rikki said. "Yeah, my parents missed my birthday for a stupid hotel meeting." She said, her eyes watering again. "Well, it could be worse. We could have no parents at all." Emma said. "Actually, that's not a bad idea." Rikki mused. "Huh?" Bella asked, tilting her head to the side. "Well, why not just stay here! This could be our own secret home! Think about it. We'd never

have to be sad because our parents ignore us anymore, and Cleo, you wouldn't have to deal with Kim!" she said. "Ok, you've got me hooked." I said. "Wait! We can't just stay here! What about food, and water?" Emma asked. "Simple. There's a freshwater stream up there, and we could just swim somewhere where there's wild fruit!" Bella said. "But we can't drink that water! It's dirty!" Emma said. "Yeah, but it'll be safe if we boil it first. I found that out when we went to Africa." Bella said. "Ok, well, what about clothes?" I asked. "Easy. When we went to Asia, I found out that people make their clothes from plants and big leaves. They're really comfortable, and really cool, and I learned how. They even showed me how to preserve the leaves so they don't dry out!" Bella explained. "Alright, I'm in!" Rikki said. "Me too." Bella said. I glanced at Emma questioningly. "Well, I guess it couldn't hurt." She said. I nodded, then said. "I'm in."

"Ok, first things first, we'll each have a different job. I'll handle the food." Emma said, drawing in the sand with her finger. "And I'll go get some leaves and stuff." I volunteered. "I'll help you." Cleo volunteered. "Cool. I also need some sharp and small sticks, to use as sewing needles." I said. "Got it." she said, running off from our spot on the beach. "And Rikki, you can get some fire wood." Emma commanded. "On it." she agreed, running off in another direction. I heard a \_splash! \_and I knew Emma had dove, probably to go off and find some food. "Here! These are perfect!" I said, ripping some leaves off a bush. They were at least two thirds of a meter tall, and about a half meter across. They'd do nicely for a skirt. I grabbed some long vines, which I'd use for thread. "Hey Bella!" Cleo said, running up to me. "Will these work?" she asked hopefully. "Perfect! They're nice and pointy!" I exclaimed. She smiled sheepishly, glad she could help. "I'm going to enjoy being your sister." I said. "What?" she asked. "Well, it's just, I figured we could be a family. You know, and island type of family?" I asked. "Oh sure! Come on, sis." She said. we headed back to the cave, where Rikki was in one of the separate wings of the cave, setting up fire wood. "Ok, I was thinking, this could be the family room, where we just sit and chat or come to be warm." She explained. "Yeah, and we could each have our own rooms." Cleo said. "Great idea, Cleo." Rikki complimented. "What's a great idea?" Emma asked, her head popping up above the surface of the water. "We each get our own rooms!" I said. "Nice. Well, guess what? I found this other island, apples, bananas, oranges, strawberries, peaches all over the place! We've hit the jack pot!" She said. "Cool! Let's go!" I said, jumping in. The other two followed, and we chased after Emma, a few feet behind. As we arrived, we dragged ourselves onto the sand. Rikki used her power to steam dry us, and I was shocked. I didn't know they had powers too. Emma led us a to a fruit tree grove, with ripe, sweet smelling fruit everywhere! We started picking, I gathered mangos, Emma gathered apples, Rikki grabbed some bananas, and Cleo scooped up as many oranges as she could carry. "We'll come back for more." Emma announced. We went back to the beach, carrying the food. We dove, swimming away, back to our new home.

## 2. Chapter 2

As we arrived back at the moon pool, I announced we'd can the food. I'd learned how in Europe, so I knew what I was talking about.

"But what do we can them \_in\_?" Cleo asked.

"That's where you come in. If you can make some water jars, that'll help."

"Alright" she said, a little unsure. She created a medium sized jar, and I stuck out my hand. I turned it to jelly, then did the same gesture again, hardening it. It turned rock solid, plunging into the water. I hurried forward and grabbed it.

"Perfect!" I said.

"That's brilliant!" Emma said.

"Thanks, Em." Cleo said shyly. We made so many more jars, I lost count. We would use some for getting water from above, and some for the food. I volunteered to do all the canning, while Rikki and Cleo went back for more fruit, and Emma went to get water. Rikki made a fire, so I could boil the water, and keep warm in the night.

Emma dropped down the tunnel, careful not to get wet, she had three jars of fresh drinking water, ready to be boiled. "This was all I could carry." She said, handing them to me.

"Thanks. This is plenty." I said. After a while, Cleo and Rikki surfaced in the water, more fruit to be canned. We helped haul them out, causing us to grow tails too, but Rikki just dried us off. We set to work, preparing for the night. I showed Rikki how to can fruit, first peeling them then heating the contents so they melted, then I turned them to jelly. Emma worked on boiling the water, using her ice powers to make handles so she wouldn't burn herself. Rikki would have done it, but she was busy canning the food. Cleo and Emma left for more firewood, while I wove blankets out of grass. We made a pretty good team, if I do say so myself. I also made some flower pillows, using the soft petals to make comfortable rests for our heads.

-Later-

-After they'd finished preparing for the night-

-Emma's POV-

I twirled around, letting my new leaf skirt fray out like a ballerina tu-tu.

"Wow, Bella. These are so cute!" Cleo exclaimed, glancing down at her skirt and tank top, which Bella had sewed out of large leaves, also attaching some flowers for extra decoration with sticky tree sap she'd found. Rikki had a short leaf mini skirt, along with a strapless top that stopped half way between her chest line and belly button. It was really cute, and the bright red flower on the top right corner really complimented her blond hair. My skirt was longer, reaching my knees, it twirled outwards when I spun, and it had little blue flowers around the waste, all stuck to a long vine, just like a belt. My tank top was wide strapped, with a blue flower on each strap. Cleo's skirt was longer than Rikki's, but shorter than mine. It reached the mid-way between to her knees, and was of woven grass and leaves, giving it a cool, unique pattern. It had purple flowers hemming the bottom, giving it a nice finishing touch. She had a yellow flower tucked in her hair, and a yellow and purple patterned

flower bracelet on her right wrist. I had a blue and white flower anklet on my left ankle, while Rikki had a red and orange one around her neck. Bella had a skirt just a few centimeters longer than Rikki's, and a similar belly shirt, which was also longer. She had a wreath of pink and white flowers on her head, along with a pink and white bracelet on her left wrist. We all looked like typical stereo type island girls, and we were all barefoot. Just like most castaways from those movies. Bella looked kind of like our queen, our leader. Because she knew all this stuff about surviving, and because of the wreath of flowers on her head, she did kind of resemble an island princess. I'd have to talk to the other girls about that. We could maybe even take turns at being the 'princess' of the island. What? We still need entertainment. We're still nine year old girls. Nine year old girls who happen to be mermaids, but still. Who \_doesn't\_ want to be a princess every now and then?

"We look amazing! Thanks Bella!" Rikki said, placing a red flower in her hair.

"Yeah, we all look great. And you were right! These are really comfortable." I added.

She blushed. "Thanks, you guys. I guess traveling the world pays off. Speaking of which, where are we?"

"Uh, on Mako Island. It's near the Gold Coast, Australia." I stated.

"Wow. I swam that far?" she exclaimed.

"How far? Where'd you come from?" Cleo asked.

"Ireland. I just became a mermaid last night." Bella explained.

"Really? Wow, does that mean there are other moon pools?" Rikki asked.

"Moon pools?"

"It's what we call the place where we became mermaids." I explained.

"Oh." She said, stretching out the 'o' sound. "Well, yeah, I guess so. There's a moon pool in Ireland, by the sea cliffs." She explained.

"So, we should be on the lookout for other mermaids?" Cleo asked.

"I suppose so." I replied.

"Oh. Is that good or bad?" Rikki asked.

"I'm not sure. But we should settle in for the night soon. I'm exhausted." Bella said, stifling a yawn.

"Yeah. Goodnight guys." Rikki said, walking off into her own cave. Cleo and Bella also departed, and I went to my own cave. I found a comfortable sand bed, a flower petal pillow, and a woven grass blanket. A small fire was in the corner, surrounded by rocks so it

wouldn't spread, even though sand can't catch on fire. At least, I don't think it can. But it gave it a real comfortable, safe feeling to it, and I enjoyed it. Bella sure was good at this survival in the wild thing. I settled down on my bed, which was only about sixty centimeters from the fire. Covering up with my blanket, I laid down on my side, my back to the fire to keep my eyes shielded, I laid my head on my pillow.

I closed my eyes, whispering "Goodnight." I was glad to finally be in a real home, with my sisters, thinking my parents hadn't even noticed my absence.

-In's Rikki's Cave-

-Rikki's POV-

I sat down on my bed, clenching my fist slightly, and my fire grew warmer. I smiled, wondering again how I'd gotten so lucky. Being a mermaid was the best thing ever. Because of it, I now had three spectacular sisters, a wonderful home where I could be adventurous and explore, and plus, the outfits were supremely cute and sassy, totally my style. That's what I hated about life on the mainland. I was always the outcast because of my tomboy ways. Most girls wanted a Barbie doll or a new dress, but not me. I didn't like the girly girl types. Some of them are exceptional, like Cleo and Emma. They're great; they're friendly and not total snobs, like Miriam. Sure, they don't appreciate getting too dirty, but even I have to admit, it does irritate the skin after a while.

Anyway, I love my sisters very much, even though we just met maybe a month ago, with the exception of Bella, who we'd just met today. I laid down, covering myself with my woven blanket, smiling. Tomorrow would be the best day ever. Because we'd already collected our supplies, we had all day to just explore and chillax. No school, no parents, no younger siblings (for Emma and Cleo anyway). I sighed, thinking of how wonderful my life would be now that I was home, in my room inside a volcano. How many other girls could say they lived in a dormant volcano with a magical pool of water in it, on an uninhabited island? None, besides my sisters. I closed my eyes, drifting into sleep, dreaming about all the adventures we'd have as we grew older.

End  
file.